

OPNAV Report Symbol 5750-1
Command Serial Number: 064
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Classification: UNCLASSIFIED//~~FOUO~~

Command Operations Report FY-11

1. Command Data

Name of your Command or Organization: AIRBORNE EARLY WARNING
SQUADRON 77

Unit Identification Code (UIC), per the SNDL: 55651

Name and Rank of Commander/Commanding Officer/Officer in Charge:

Last: HEYNE First: GERALD M.I.: T Rank: CDR

Date Assumed Command (date format YYYY-MM-DD): 2011-10-08

Mission/Command Employment/Area of Operations: COUNTER
TRANSNATIONAL ORGANIZED CRIME (C-TOC), OPERATIONAL SUPPORT (OS),
HUMANITARIAN/DISASTER RELIEF (HA/DR), HOMELAND DEFENSE (HD)/
SOUTHCOM AOR, CONUS

Permanent Location (Home Port for deployable units): NAS JRB
NEW ORLEANS, LA

Immediate Superior In Command:

Operational: COMUSNAVSOUTH/C4F

Administrative: COMMANDER, TACTICAL SUPPORT WING (CTSW)

Identify your assigned Task Force/Group/Unit name(s) and
mission(s). Include OPLAN(s) and or named operations you
participated in during Task Force assignment (if applicable):

JOINT INTER-AGENCY TASK FORCE SOUTH (JIATF-S), OPERATION CARIB
SHIELD, OPERATION AZTEC EAGLE, OPERATION CAPER FOCUS, FLEET
SUPPORT/OPERATIONAL SUPPORT (JTTFEX), JOINT UAS OPERATIONS
(CUSTOMS/USCG GUARDIAN UAV)

Name(s) of Forces, Commands, Ships, Squadrons or Units assigned or under your operational control (if applicable): N/A

Type and number of Aircraft Assigned and Tail Codes, if applicable: SIX E-2Cs, BUNO: 164493, 164353, 164485, 164486, 164487, 164483.

Commands, Detachments or Units deployed on board or stationed aboard as tenant activities (as applicable): N/A

Number of Personnel Assigned:

Officers: 53 Enlisted: 44 Civilian: 54 (Northrop-Grumman)

Command Point of Contact (required entry, complete in full):

Name (Rank, First Name, Middle Initial, Last Name): LCDR

(b) (6)

Job Title/Office Code: ASSISTANT ADMIN OFFICER

E-mail (both classified and unclassified, if available):

(b) (6)

Phone number(s):

Command Mailing Address: VAW-77, 400 RUSSELL AVE, HANGAR 4, NEW ORLEANS, LA 70143

2. Commander's Assessment

The Nightwolves continued their high tempo operations in 2011, flying 788 sorties, 432 of which were on deployment, accumulating 2,379 flight hours, of which 1,679 hours were in direct support of deployed Counter Trans-National Organized Crime (C-TOC) operations and other Fleet Support requirements.

Det 11-01 based at Forward Operating Location (FOL) Curacao was a successful deployment for the Nightwolves. During 42 days of direct COCOM / JCS Counter Narco-Terrorism Support our command provided 396.2 flight hours and 99 sorties ISO Operation CARIB SHIELD. The detachment utilized a 3, 2, and 1-plane schedule to place assets on station for an afternoon Double Hawkeye AEW/SSC flight and an afternoon/evening self contained AEW/SSC/ATOI search mission to support operations. We were able to return to forward-deployed operations in the AOR and flew missions out of Puerto Rico, Aruba, and Barbados. We displayed operational flexibility for JIATF-S, shifting our flight schedule left and right as new intelligence became available. We also flew Double Eagle missions with a DEA B-200, Dutch Coast Guard Dash 8, and French Customs 401 maximizing the E-2's radar detection

capabilities. During DET 11-01 we recorded the following OPERATIONAL Milestones:

1. Executed an average of 9.4 CN support hours per day with a 90% sortie completion rate.
2. 5 Narco-terrorists arrested.
3. Localization, tracking and targeting of 9 suspect air tracks of interest (ATOIs). This was approximately 47% percent of the total number of CARIB ATOIs reported to JIATFS during the course of this detachment.
4. Localization, tracking and reporting of 6 surface contacts. This was approximately 11 percent of the total number of CARIB surface contacts reported during our detachment.
5. ZERO liberty and ZERO safety incidents.
6. Coordination of 7 airlift evolutions moving 124 personnel and 216,600 lbs of equipment into theatre.

Detachment 11-02 to Comalapa, El Salvador successfully demonstrated the squadron's sustainability and flexibility. Completing the longest detachment in this command's fifteen year history, 94 days, was difficult and the success rests solely on the shoulders of each member of the unit. My command provided 120 personnel expending 1672 ACTIVE/SELRES/FTS manpower days to prosecute the nation's continued war on drugs safely and effectively.

Major accomplishments:

1. More than 890 hours flown through 216 sorties and a 94% sortie completion rate, resulting in five narco-terrorists captured and 2.4MT of illicit narcotics prevented from entering U.S. borders.
2. Maintaining a 1.0 presence to a satellite detachment location (Grand Cayman) through innovative scheduling of crews and assets to provide simultaneous support to USSOUTHCOM and JIATF-S in two separate theatres of operations (Western Caribbean and Eastern Pacific) over a nine day period.
3. Successful integration and implementation of Selres DTS procedures.
4. The coordination effort which lead to the safe and successful movement of over 200 personnel, 310,000 pounds of cargo and 330 aircraft parts through 11 airlifts.

Health of personnel was a major issue. On 20 March 2011, VAW-77 personnel began to experience a severe outbreak of what appeared to be a food borne GI illness. For most, the symptoms were akin to those associated with influenza and lasted approximately

three to five days once medicine was dispensed. Of a more grave concern, are the more rare cases that left my aircrew ill for greater than 30 days. Once the suspected source was identified, we significantly reduced the number of affected personnel, primarily due to simple awareness and avoidance of the Quality Inn Hotel Los Balcones restaurant buffet. Also, based upon correspondence with the Army veterinarians responsible for conducting the inspections, we purchased water for all Navy personnel to consume. Though all personnel were exposed, not all became ill. Due to the aircrew manning strategy, this illness severely compromised our ability to execute. Retrospective analysis revealed that the illness affected approximately 50-60% of all personnel. Daily analysis showed that, for aircrew, during the initial stages of this outbreak as many as 84% were affected before tapering off once preventative measures, awareness, and avoidance became the norm through the remainder of the det. In total, 38 persons were diagnosed and treated for this illness.

While the precise source remains unknown, it is clear that the level of inspection conducted at the Quality Inn merely allows the hotel to cater events taking place during a two week block of time. The level of inspection required to clear a facility for permanent billeting is much greater and not currently being done despite the constant presence of Navy personnel (E-2 and P-3 detachments) billeted at the Quality Hotel El Salvador.

Many lessons learned were also gathered from this ground-breaking event. Operationally, we established well founded limitations to better monitor the pace which drives our aircrew and also communicate more with the on-site Northrop Grumman leadership to ensure the management of the safety of their personnel remains top priority. From a maintenance perspective, our goal is to ensure all radar technicians are appropriately trained to maximize the effectiveness of our weapons system and minimize costs associated with repeated failure of sensitive equipment. We will continue to coordinate with CNRFC staff officers to bring resolution to the initial growing pains experienced as DTS and Sel Res travel are integrated. Finally, when the opportunity presents itself, we will continue to grow our relationship with our hosts at CSL Comalapa.

VAW 77's OPFOR Air Detachment to San Diego, CA successfully demonstrated the squadron's flexibility and fortitude in executing its assigned role of homeland defense and operational support. Having returned from a challenging 94-day C-TOC detachment only thirteen days prior, we mobilized two aircraft

and more than 30 personnel to provide operational support to COMTHRDFLT for CSG-3's Joint Task Force Exercise (JTFEX).

Major accomplishments:

1. Nearly 25 mission hours were flown across nine sorties in five days, resulting in a 100% sortie completion rate and real-world AIC, Strike and aircraft stationing scenarios not often presented during Counter-Illicit Drug trafficking missions.
2. More than 15 hours of dedicated OPFOR AIC control of ADEX and Strike events, at times controlling 12+ aircraft.
3. Strike planning and coordination with VFA-204 and various other intercept, contract air corporations.
4. Developed invaluable relationships with Third Fleet that have already opened doors for future VAW 77 participation and training opportunities during upcoming fleet operations and major exercises.

The final detachment was the most difficult in terms of squadron planning and execution. I am very proud of every member of my command. In less than forty days, overcoming an exhausting list of requirements and taskers from staff officers, VAW-77 safely and successfully deployed to Barranquilla, Colombia, for the first time. The arrival of VAW-77 aircraft in Barranquilla was the culmination of an enormous effort by many staffs working together for a common goal. Great strides and in-roads were made and established with the Colombian Air Force and Navy throughout our detachment. We demonstrated ultimate flexibility and exercised joint and international capability throughout. Major successes:

1. Over a 44 day detachment, we accomplished 370.3 flight hours through 92 sorties, achieving a 96% sortie completion rate in direct support of USSOUTHCOM, resulting in the interdiction of 3.5 MT of narcotics and the arrest of seven narco-terrorists preventing their entry into U.S. borders. On 02 August two Nightwolf Hawkeyes partnered with the Colombian Navy's Coast Guard assets to interdict a go-fast vessel carrying three narco-terrorists and one MT of narcotics. Additionally, on 30 July we executed a SAR mission, coordinating the rescue of three mariners stranded at sea.
2. We moved 107 personnel and 263,960 pounds of mission essential equipment across five military airlifts. Our Maintenance Team achieved an 86% MC rate over the 44 day deployment, losing only one sortie due to a maintenance issue.
3. The squadron provided training for the Colombian Air Force KFIR pilots to sharpen their English skills and utilize tactical

communications. Additionally, we controlled AIC events to hone their combat skill set all in preparation for an evaluation exercise that will determine their ability to participate for the first time in Red Flag.

Most importantly I believe that my squadron performed impeccably as ambassadors for the U.S. Navy. The relationships that were fostered and grown with members of the Colombian Air Force and Navy will pay dividends for many years and operations to come. This is especially true with regard to the Colombian Navy. By the time we left, they were literally opening their house to us and stating that their spaces were our spaces, we are always welcome and that as "Navy" we are all one family.

Overall, Detachment 11-03 was a resounding success. The squadron will always be credited with orchestrating and completing the first ever deployment to Colombia, establishing professional relationships with their host nation defense counterparts and executing successful international Counter Illicit Trafficking operations in the Western Caribbean.

3. Chronology and Narrative

Chronology:

- a. OCT10 - NOV10 C-TOC Detachment, Forward Operating Location (FOL) Curacao, Netherlands Antilles.
- b. FEB11 - APR11 C-TOC Detachment, CSL Comalapa, El Salvador.
- c. JUN11 - OPFORAIR Detachment, San Diego, CA, United States.
- d. JUL11 - SEP11, C-TOC Detachment, Barranquilla, Colombia.

Narrative:

OCT10 - NOV10 CIT Deployment FOL Curacao Netherland Antilles:

See Supporting Report (a).

FEB11 - APR11 CIT Deployment, CSL Comalapa, El Salvador.

See Supporting Report (b).

JUN11 - OPFOR AIR, San Diego, CA, Unites States.

See Supporting Report (c).

JUL11 - SEP11, CIT Deployment, Barranquilla, Colombia.

See Supporting Report (d).

4. Supporting Reports

- a. VAW-77 DET 11-01 End of Action Report 07 OCT 2010
 - b. VAW-77 DET 11-02 End of Action Report 16 FEB 2011
 - c. VAW-77 JTFEXDET End of Action Report 02 JUN 2011
 - d. VAW-77 DET 11-03 End of Action Report 16 JUL 2011
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5. Published Documents

6. Photographs



G. T. HEYNE